

Virginia Department of Health (VDH)

Division of Disease Prevention (DDP)

Monthly Ebulletin



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November 2017 Edition

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President Declares Opioid Epidemic a Public Health Emergency

President Trump instructed the Acting Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to declare the opioid epidemic a nationwide [public health emergency](#). The Commission on Combating Drug Addiction and the Opioid Crisis recommended declaring a public health emergency or a further-reaching Stafford Act emergency in their [interim report](#). The public health emergency declaration will last for 90 days, but may be extended by the Secretary. The action specifically allows for the “shifting of resources within HIV/AIDS programs to help people eligible for those programs receive substance abuse treatment.”

Affordable Care Act (ACA) and Medicare Open Enrollment: It's Time for ADAP Clients to Sign Up for 2018 Health Insurance!

The 2018 ACA Open Enrollment Period is from November 1, 2017 to December 15, 2017. VDH ADAP will support clients' premiums and medication co-payments for all ACA Marketplace plans from Cigna, CareFirst, Healthkeepers (Anthem), Kaiser, and Piedmont. VDH will also support all Marketplace plans from Optima except OptimaFit Gold. Changes in 2018 include the following:

- In 2018, Virginia ADAP's pharmacy benefits manager, Ramsell, will be able to coordinate medication co-payments with Cigna for the first time.
- Aetna, Innovation Health, and United Healthcare are not offering plans in Virginia's Marketplace for 2018.

During open enrollment periods, AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) clients can sign up for Marketplace health insurance and VDH will help with premiums and medication co-payments.

IMPORTANT OPEN ENROLLMENT CHANGES:

- The open enrollment period is shorter this year. **[SIGN UP FOR HEALTH INSURANCE NOW.](#)**

- Over 1,700 persons will need to change insurance carriers for 2018.
- More community-based organizations can help you sign up and pay your first premium payment. Benalytics is a company that has been hired by VDH to help Virginia ADAP clients sign up for health insurance. Clients will be contacted by Benalytics to enroll in a 2018 insurance plan or you can call their toll-free number 1-855-483-4647.
- Some people only have one health insurance carrier option. Please sign up for a plan with that carrier, even if your HIV doctor is not in that carrier's network. VDH will work with the doctor you see to be sure you can receive HIV medical care. Please call VDH at (855) 362-0658 or your doctor if you have questions.
- In addition, eight Ryan White Part B-funded agencies will assist with client enrollment into ACA Marketplace insurance plans for 2018. Five agencies will use Ryan White Part B funds to make ACA Marketplace insurance premium binder payments for their clients. If you would like more information on how these agencies can assist clients with ACA enrollment, please contact [Mary Browder](#) at (804) 864-7199 or visit the HIV Care Services [website](#).

Medicare Part D Assistance Program (MPAP) Open Enrollment:

Medicare Open Enrollment is from October 15, 2017 to December 7, 2017. Letters have been sent to clients already enrolled in MPAP and those that need to enroll in MPAP.

Documents needed for MPAP enrollment:

- Front and back copy of Medicare card
- Front and back copy of Part C or Part D card
- Proof of monthly premium in the form of the coupon booklet or, if AARP client, letter sent to client with premium amount
- Low income subsidy (LIS) status letter, if applicable

For more information about ADAP or health insurance open enrollment, click [here](#).

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ADAP Application Updated

Please note the ADAP application has been updated. The new application includes a checklist of items that must accompany the application. The updated application can be found [here](#).

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Launch of New ACA Enrollment and Premium Payments Module in e2Virginia

The e2Virginia Support Team is excited to announce the launch of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) Enrollment and Premium Payments module in e2Virginia. The purpose of this module is to allow agencies to enter health insurance enrollment and premium payment information for their clients. Agencies should enter data in e2Virginia for 2018 Open Enrollment. Open enrollment began on November 1, 2017. All agencies currently registered in e2Virginia will now use the module for documentation of their clients' health insurance plan and premium payments information following enrollment of their clients in health insurance plans. The e2Virginia Support Team held two trainings for participating agencies on October 18 and 19.

If you have any questions about the ACA Enrollment or Premium Payments module in e2Virginia, please contact [Lauren Yerkes](#). For more resources and technical assistance, please contact support@e2virginia.com.

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Internal VDH Webpage Update

The intranet webpages for VDH were updated last month. If you are a health department employee, you can access the DDP page at <http://vdhweb.vdh.virginia.gov/epidemiology/divisions-and-programs/division-of-disease-prevention/>, which will connect you to the program pages. Update your bookmarks to ensure you are accessing the most up-to-date information!

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World AIDS Day is December 1

World AIDS Day is observed annually on December 1. For agencies planning events, there are multiple resources available for use. Agencies planning events for World AIDS Day may request educational resources, posters, flyers, etc., from the Virginia Disease Prevention Hotline. To view and/or request available materials, visit the [HIV & STD Resources page](#). Instructions are included on how to access each type of material at the top of each page.

Agencies participating in events for World AIDS Day may also submit their event for inclusion on the DDP calendar. To view the calendar and see instructions on how to submit an event, please visit the [HIV Prevention Services page](#).

For resources and materials from national campaigns, please feel free to visit HIV.gov or [Greater Than AIDS](#).

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Order Free Condoms for World AIDS Day

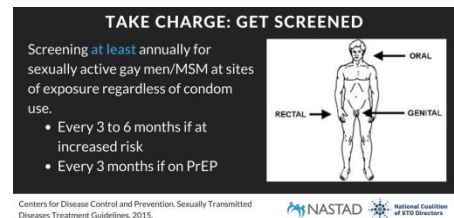
With many agencies planning events for World AIDS Day, be sure to have ample supplies of free condoms and lubricant on hand. If your organization is not participating in the Condom Distribution Program, it is easy to do so, and both health districts and community partners are eligible for the program.

Organizations may order up to 25,000 condoms each quarter or 100,000 condoms per year. Those with multiple sites may be approved to order more. Female condoms and non-latex condoms are also available. Do you have questions? If so, please contact [Beth Marschak](#) at (804) 864-8008.

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Prioritizing the Health of MSM: Extragenital STD Screening Call-to-Action

The Gay Men's Health Equity Group (sponsored by the National Coalition of STD Directors and the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors) developed a call to action and supplemental infographics encouraging STD screening of men who have sex with men (MSM). Though many STDs remain undiagnosed and unreported, 2016 was the third consecutive year in which national increases were seen in reported chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis infections. Gay, bisexual, and other MSM are disproportionately impacted by these STDs. This is a call to action for health departments and medical providers to normalize extragenital STD screening. [Read more.](#)



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HHS Adult and Adolescent Antiretroviral Treatment Guidelines Updated

The HHS Panel on Antiretroviral Guidelines for Adults and Adolescents has released an updated version of the [Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in Adults and Adolescents Living with HIV](#).

The following are among several key guidelines updated:

- These updated guidelines strongly recommend immediate initiation of antiretroviral therapy (ART) on the day of HIV diagnosis. This “test-and-treat” strategy would prevent morbidity and mortality, both through better treatment of the individual and reduced spread of HIV. Getting and keeping an undetectable viral load is the best thing people living with HIV can do to stay healthy.
- In the “What to Start” section, ART regimens recommended for initial therapy were originally classified as “Recommended,” “Alternative,” or “Other Regimens.” In the updated guidelines, regimens are now either “Recommended Initial Regimens for Most People with HIV” or “Recommended Initial Regimens in Certain Clinical Situations.”
- In addition, the guidelines now use People-First Language. People-First Language is a way of reducing stigma and showing respect for individuals who are living with HIV by focusing on the person instead of the disease.

For a complete list of guideline updates, please see [What's New in the Guidelines](#). Additions and revisions are also highlighted in yellow throughout the PDF version of the guidelines. For more information, please contact [Safere Diawara](#) at (804) 864-

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His Health Provides Continuing Education Opportunities about PrEP for Health Care Professionals

[His Health](#) is a free, accredited, and self-paced online learning platform for healthcare providers and public health professionals. The platform is now highlighting their training, [PrEP for Black gay men](#). His Health, sponsored by the National Alliance of State and Territorial AIDS Directors, provides a compendium of care models, training modules, and resources for enhanced linkage, retention, and engagement strategies targeting Black MSM. This site offers continuing medical education and continuing nursing unit credits for clinicians to increase their capacity to accelerate healthcare service delivery to black MSM. Check out free, accredited [PrEP continuing education training](#) and other modules available through His Health.

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Virginia HIV Testing Campaign Request for Proposals (RFP) Awarded

Kaiser Family Foundation/Greater Than AIDS, has been awarded a contract with DDP to create and implement two campaigns for HIV testing in Virginia: 1) promote routine HIV testing for men throughout Virginia and 2) promote ways to access VDH-funded testing. Campaign placements are anticipated in 2018.



While in the planning phase of the campaign, representatives from Greater Than AIDS may reach out to locations offering testing in Virginia for informative interviews. For more information on the upcoming HIV testing campaigns, please contact [Chris Barnett](#), Social Media Coordinator.

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Recognizing Virginia's Disease Intervention Services

DDP Director Diana Jordan sent a [letter](#) to disease intervention specialists (DIS) on October 6, 2017 in observation of DIS Recognition Day. Thank you, DIS, for your efforts to protect the health of Virginia's residents by preventing the spread of infections, increasing access to medical care, educating the public about disease transmission and risk, and



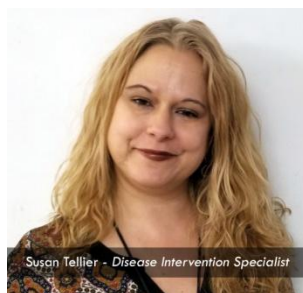
linking medical providers with health departments. As the health care landscape evolves, DIS are needed even more as patient navigators and network builders to ensure patients are linked to care through expanded relationships with health care providers.

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PERSONNEL

Welcome

DDP welcomes **Lark Washington** as the new Hepatitis C Epidemiology Profile Coordinator for the SODA unit. She will be updating the [Hepatitis C Epi-Profile](#) released in June 2016. Lark has a background in water and wastewater research, data analysis, and community engagement. She graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Virginia. Lark can be reached at lark.washington@vdh.virginia.gov or (804) 864-7350.



Susan Tellier - Disease Intervention Specialist

Congratulations to **Susan Tellier** and welcome to **Zina Boyd** as DDP DIS. Zina and Susan will both work out of the Madison Building providing coverage throughout the state. Susan has been filling the position as a contractor for just over a year. Zina worked for three years at Richmond City Health Department as a DIS.



Zina Boyd - Disease Intervention Specialist

Susan can be reached at susan.tellier@vdh.virginia.gov or (804) 864-8045. Zina can be reached at zina.boyd@vdh.virginia.gov or (804) 864-8036. The [DIS Directory](#) has been updated to reflect this staffing change.

Farewell

Tangye Harris retired in October after 30+ years of service. Tangye was most recently the DIS Coordinator for the Central Region. In the interim during this vacancy, please continue to submit cases and field records to [Jeff Pagan](#) for review. Jeff will also be the primary contact for any questions related to field operations in the Central Region.

Spotlight: Administrative Support Team

Sadie Adkins provides administrative support for the Director and Deputy Director of DDP. She joined VDH in March, 2017. In addition to routine administrative support duties, Sadie is also responsible for reviewing all requests for purchases before they are submitted. She attends meetings for each unit within DDP, giving her the opportunity to expand her knowledge on multiple topics. Her strong organizational skills are a plus.

HIV Care Services gives thanks to **Jeannie Rector**, who has served on their administrative support team since July, 2008. Jeanne has worked in the role of executive secretary for the past 40 years. Her experience is vital to smooth operations for a large and complex work unit. She is a native New Yorker with strong family ties to her seven siblings.

Kathleen Carter has served as the Program Support Tech for HIV Prevention Services since 2003. In addition to keeping the staff organized, she oversees the database user verification process and coordinates logistics for the Community HIV Planning Group. HIV Prevention Staff know that if there is a question, she has the answer. Kathleen earned a degree in Art History in 2007 and is a member of the Appalachian Trail Club.

Whitney Glascock is the Program Support Technician for SODA. In addition to keeping SODA running smoothly since 2014, Whitney tracks DDP's software licenses and keeps the supply room stocked and organized. She is quick to volunteer to help out staff across DDP. Whitney is a Pittsburgh Steelers fan and keeps busy with her two boys. We are grateful for all that you do, Whitney!

Angela Beasley is the newest member of the group and joined the administrative support team for HIV Care Services in July, 2017. She is a newlywed and enjoys traveling, roller skating, shopping, and spending time with family. Welcome Angela.



Administrative Support Team Photo

From left to right: Kathleen Carter, Angela Beasley, Jeannie Rector, Whitney Glascock, and Sadie Adkins.

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